

THE COALITION TO PROTECT MARYLAND'S CHILDREN

*Our Mission: To combine and amplify the power of organizations and citizens working together to keep children safe from abuse and neglect. We strive to secure budgetary and public policy resources to make meaningful and measurable improvements in safety, permanence, and wellbeing.*



CPMC  
COALITION TO PROTECT  
MARYLAND'S CHILDREN

**HB1480 - Child Advocacy Centers - Continuity of Care Standards for Health Care Professionals and Reports of Violations**  
**House Appropriations Committee**  
**March 4, 2025**

**Position: OPPOSE**

The Coalition to Protect Maryland's Children is a consortium of organizations and individuals formed in 1996 who are concerned about the care of Maryland's most vulnerable children and work together to promote meaningful child welfare reform. **CPMC urges an unfavorable report on HB1480 - Child Advocacy Centers - Continuity of Care Standards for Health Care Professionals and Reports of Violations.**<sup>1</sup>

Members of our coalition work with child advocacy centers (CACs) across the state and are familiar with how they operate. CPMC is not aware of any systemic problem as it relates to quality of care or continuity of care including the transition between behavioral health providers. It is the behavioral health provider's responsibility through licensure to ensure continuity of care between providers in the event that there is a transition of care. The data requested through CACs is already information made available through behavioral health providers and licensing boards. This bill appears to be addressing a problem that does not actually exist, and may risk developing other problems, including violating confidentiality of services provided to a child by requiring notice to "child and parent or guardian" about a change in provider when that parent or legal guardian could be the one responsible for causing the child maltreatment.

All 24 CACs coordinate services with licensed mental health providers (through a linkage agreement) who are under the oversight of their relevant licensing board. The contracted licensed mental health providers have continuity of care requirements within the existing regulatory framework. **In the last five years, Maryland child advocacy centers have served over 26,000 children, receiving only two complaints with no wrongdoing found of the centers in question.** It is for these reasons that the Coalition to Protect Maryland's Children **urges an unfavorable report** HB1480 - Child Advocacy Centers - Continuity of Care Standards for Health Care Professionals and Reports of Violations.

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<sup>1</sup> Members of CPMC represented by this written testimony include Catholic Charities of Baltimore, Child Justice, Center for Hope, Child Justice, Court Appointed Special Advocates (MD CASA), Court Appointed Special Advocates (Baltimore County), Everstand, MD Chapter - American Academy of Pediatrics, Maryland Association of Resources for Families and Youth (MARFY), Maryland Children's Alliance, Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MCASA) Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence, and National Association of Social Workers – MD.